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TWO LETTERS

Of Great Concernment, WITH THEIR ANSWERS.

The One,

From the *Scotiſh* Commiſsioners at *London*, to the Generall Aſſembly of the Kirk of *Scotland*.

Together with the Anſwer of the aforeſaid Generall Aſſembly to the ſaid Commiſſioners.

The Other,

From the Synod of Divines in *England*, to the Generall Aſſembly of *Scotland*.

Together with the Anſwer alſo of the aforeſaid Generall Aſſembly in *Scotland*, to the ſaid Synod.

LONDON,
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Die Jovis, 23 Jan. 1645. Post meridiem.

Sess. II.

The Letter from the Commissioners at *London* to the Generall Assembly.

Right Honourable, Reverend, and beloved in the Lord,

AS we are not without the knowledge, so are we not without the feeling of the distresses of our Native Countrey, and of the troubles of our dear Brethren, specially that the hand of the Lord is stretched out against you, not onely by Invasion from without of the basest of the children of men, but also by the unnaturall treachery of some within, who have dealt perfidiously in the Covenant and Cause of God: *They hisse and gnash the teeth; they say, We have swallowed her up: certainly this is the day that we looked for: We have found, We have seen it; the Lord hath caused thine Enemy to rejoyce over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine Adversaries:* Yet (saith the Lord, who is *thy maker* and thy *husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel*) *for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hide*

my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindnesse will I have mercy on thee: for this is as the waters of Noah, the Covenant of my peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. When the foundation of the House of the Lord was laid, the Priests and Levites sung together in praising and giving thanks to the Lord, *Because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* And we hope at this time upon the coming of our Reverend Brethren, and the sight of that which they bring with them, the noise of the shout of joy, shall be louder than the noise of the weeping of the People. This we may say, that not many yeers ago, many of us would have been content to have losed our lives, that we might have obtained that which the Lord, if not in a miraculous, yet in a marvellous and mercifull providence, hath brought to passe in this Island, in these dayes, which many before us have desired to see, and have not seen. God forbid that it should seem a small thing in your eyes which is done here already, as it is expressed in a Paper from the Parliament, and Letters from the Assembly. Ye are best acquainted with the temptations and difficulties which ye meet with there, which are also very sensible unto us; And when we consider how the Lord hath carried on his Work here, at the first taking of the Covenant, and since, against much learning and contradiction, against much policy, power, and all sorts of opposition, (such as Reformation useth to encounter) we are ravished with admiration of the right hand of the Almighty. For our part, we may confidently avouch in the sight of God, and before you, whom next unto God we do respect and reverence, and to whom as your servants we are accomptable, that in all our proceedings we had first of all the word of God before our eyes for the Rule; and for our Patern the Church of *Scotland*, so much as was possible; and no lesse (if not more) than if all this time since we parted from you, we had been sitting in a Nationall Assembly there, and debating matters with our Brethren at home: Where we were not able to get every thing framed to our minde, we have endeavoured as much as we could, to preserve our own Reformation and practice, of which our Brethren will give you accompt in the particulars, we hope, to your satisfaction. That an Uniformity in every thing is not obtained in the beginning, let it not seem strange; The levelling of the high Mountain of Prelacy, The laying aside of the Book of

Commo-

Common Prayer, The Directory of Worſhip concluded in both Houſes of Parliament, and the principall Propoſitions of Church-Government paſſed in the Aſſembly, all of them according to the Solemne League and Covenant, the greateſt of all, are three or foure witneſſes to prove, that the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad, and which make us *like them that dream*: And we are ſure, that not onely the Reformed Kirks, but the Papiſts will ſay, The Lord hath done great things for them.

All that we deſire, is:

1. That the Directory of Worſhip may be returned by our Brethren with all poſſible expedition, that it may be publiſhed here, and put in practiſe, as that which is extreamly longed for by the good People, and will be a remedy of the many differences and diviſions about the Worſhip of God in this Kingdom, eſpecially in this place: If there be any thing in it that diſpleaſeth, let it be remonſtrate upon irrefragable and convincing reaſon, otherwiſe ye will in your wiſdom give approbation to it.

2. If there be any particular differences among ſome Brethren, which are not determined, but paſſed over in ſilence in the Directory, and yet hinted at in the Letter from the Aſſembly, we hope that in your wiſdom ye will ſo conſider of them, that they may be laid aſide in due time, and that in the mean while, till the Directory be concluded and put in practice, there be no trouble about them, for that were as Snow in Summer, and as Rain in Harveſt. We know nothing of that kinde, that all of us who love Unity, Order, and Edification, may not perfectly agree in, without ſcandall or diſturbance: And we beſeech the Lord to keep that Kirk free of ſuch Sects and Monſters of Opinions, as are daily ſet on foot and multiplied in this Kingdom, through the want of that Church-Government by Aſſemblies, which hath preſerved us, and we hope, through the bleſſing of God, ſhall cure them.

3. Becauſe Nationall Aſſemblies cannot frequently conveene, we humbly deſire, that ſuch a Commiſſion may be ſetled, as we may at all occaſions, till the Work be finiſhed, have our recourſe unto, for our direction and reſolution: for we know both our own weakneſſe, and the greatneſſe of the Work: wherein we can

promiſe no more but to be faithfull in obeying your command ments, as in the ſight of God, whom with our Souls we pray, to grant you his Spirit, to guide you into all truth: And thus continue

Worceſter houſe, Jan. 6.
1645.

Your humble and faithfull Servants

Subſcrib. LOUDOUN. ALEX. HENDERSON.
JO. MAITLAND. SAM. RUTHERFURD.

DIRECT.
For the Right Reverend the Generall Aſſembly of the Kirk of *Scotland.*

The Letter from the Synode of Divines in *England*, to the Generall Aſſembly.

Right honourable, right revered, and dearly beloved in the LORD JESUS.

AS cold Waters to a thirſty ſoul, ſo is good news from a far Country. We your Brethren, yet remaining in the Furnace of affliction, and ſtill labouring in the very fire, Have at length, by the good Hand of God upon us, attained ſo far toward the Mark at which we all aime, that we ſhall now ſend you, by two of your Reverend and Faithfull Commiſſioners Mr *Robert Bailie*, and Mr *George Gilleſpie* (our much honoured Brethren) ſome good news of that great Work, after which your zeal for Truth and Peace hath ſo much thirſted, and for which you *have not loved your lives unto the death.*

Our

Our progreſſe therein hath not been ſo expeditious as was deſired and expected. This, unto ſuch as either know not, or conſider not, The weight and greatneſſe of the Work, nor The manifold difficulties which have occurred to obſtruct our proceedings in this day of darkneſſe and calamity (too ſad to be expreſſed) hath been like unto *hope deferred, which makes the* heart ſick: Howbeit, we truſt, *That when their deſire* (namely that which we have prepared, and are further in travell with) *ſhall come* unto them, *It will be*, through God, *a Tree of life*, as to our great comfort and encouragement, we already perceive it to be to both the honourable Houſes of Parliament.

Touching the ſeverall Papers brought to us from your Honourable and Reverend Commiſſioners, by the hands of the Committee appointed to treat with them in matters of Religion (one of the Papers, being given in the 10 of *November*, 1643, Concerneth the ſeverall ſorts of Church-officers and Aſſemblies: Another, bearing date the 24 of *January*, 1643, Concerneth Congregationall Elderſhips, and Claſſicall Presbyteries: The other, being preſented the 15 of *Auguſt* laſt, Repreſenteth the neceſſity of making greater ſpeed in ſetling the intended Uniformity in Religion, according to the late ſolemne Covenant:) We hold it our duty, in regard both of the arct and inſeparable Union, which the Lord hath happily and ſeaſonably made between you and us, and of your indefatigable and ineſtimable labour of love to this afflicted Kingdom, to give your Lordſhips and the reſt of that Venerable Aſſembly, ſome brief account.

Concerning one Confeſſion of Faith, and Forme of Catechiſme, we make no queſtion of a bleſſed and perfect harmony with you. The publike Doctrine, held out by our Church to all the World (eſpecially when it ſhall be reviewed, which is in great part done) concurring ſo much with yours, may aſſure you of your hearts deſire in thoſe particulars, ſo ſoon as time and opportunity may give us liberty to perfect what we have begun.

The chief reaſon of laying aſide the review of our publike Doctrine, after the happy and much deſired arrivall of your Reverend Commiſſioners here, was, The drawing up and accelerating of a Directory for Worſhip, and of a Forme of Church-Government; in both of which we ſtood at a greater diſtance from other Reformed Churches of Chriſt, and particularly from yours (which

we

we very much honour) with whom our solemne sacred Nationall Covenant requireth us to endeavour the neareſt Conjunction and Uniformity, that we and our posterity after us, may as Brethren live in Faith and Love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

Nor have our labours therein been frustrate: For we have perfected and transmitted a Directory for Worship, to both Houses Parliament; where it hath received such acceptance, that it is ow passed in both the Honourable Houses of Parliament; which e hope will be to the joy and comfort of all our godly and dear rethren in all His Majesties Kingdoms and Dominions.

We have not advised any imposition which might make it unwfull to vary from it in any thing; Yet we hope, all our Reverend Brethren in this Kingdom, and in yours also, will so far value nd reverence that which upon so long debate and serious deliberation hath been agreed upon in this Assembly (when it shall also asse with you, and be setled as the common publike Directory or all the Churches in the three Kingdoms) that it shall not be he lesse regarded and observed. And albeit we have not expressed n the Directory every minute particular, which is or might be either laid aside or retained among us, as comely and usefull in practice; yet we trust, that none will be so tenacious of old customs not expressely forbidden, or so averse from good examples although new, in matters of lesser consequence, as to insist upon their liberty of retaining the one, or refusing the other, because not specified in the Directory; but be studious to please others rather than themselves.

We have likewise spent divers moneths in the search of the Scriptures, to finde out the minde of Christ concerning a Forme of Church-Government, wherein we could not but expect the greatest difficulty: For our better Progresse herein, we have with all respect considered the severall Papers of your Honourable and Reverend Commissioners, touching this Head; and do with all thankfulnesse, acknowledge their great zeal, judgement, and wisdom expressed therein; as also, the excellent assistance and great furtherance of your Reverend Commissioners in this great Work; which now, through Gods goodnesse, is very near to a period also.

In pursuit where nd scrutinie of every

every Propoſition, that we might find it agreeable to, and warranted by the Word of God, in a method of our own; without reſting upon any particular modell or frame whatſoever already conſtituted: What we have performed, and how far we have proceeded therein, we leave to the information of your Reverend Commiſſioners, who have been eye and ear-witneſſes of all that hath paſt, and we doubt not but you will ſhortly receive a ſatisfactory anſwer from hence, ſo ſoon as it ſhall be paſſed in the Honourable Houſes of Parliament.

And now, Right Honourable, and Right Reverend Brethren, let it not ſeem grievous that we have thus long delayed the ſatisfying of your earneſt and juſt expectation: It is the Lot of *Jeruſalem*, to have her Walls built in troublous times, when there are many adverſaries. Nor let it offend, that (albeit we acknowledge the many, great, and ineſtimable expreſſions of your love, zeal, and helpfulneſſe unto us every way in the day of our diſtreſſe, to be beyond all that we can in words acknowledge) we profeſſe plainly to you, That we do moſt unwillingly part with thoſe our Reverend and dear Fellow-labourers, your Commiſſioners, whom now you have called home, to render an account of their imployment here; which hath been ſo managed both by them and the reſt of their Honourable and Reverend Colleagues, as deſerveth many thanks, and all Honourable acknowledgement, not onely from us, but from you alſo.

Give us leave to adde, that the long experience we have had of the great ſufficiency, integrity, and uſefulneſſe of them all, in the great Work of Chriſt our common Lord and Maſter, inforceth us (next to our greateſt ſute, for the continuance of your fervent prayers) to be earneſt ſuiters, not onely for the continuance of theſe excellent helpers, Mr *Alex. Henderſon*, and Mr *Sam. Rutherfurd*, yet remaining with us, but alſo for the ſpeedy return hither of our Reverend Brethren that are now going hence, for the perfecting of that Work which yet remains. And this ſute we truſt, you will the rather grant, becauſe of the great and joint concernment of both Churches and Kingdoms in theſe matters.

Now the ſpirit of wiſdom and of all grace reſt upon you in all your great conſultations, as at all times, ſo eſpecially now when you ſhall be gathered together in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, for the further building up and poliſhing of his Church;

and cauſe the fruit of all your labour to be to the praiſe and glory of God, and the comfort and rejoycing of the hearts of all *the Iſrael of God*: He reward all our dear Brethren of that Siſter Church and Nation manifold into their boſome, all the labours, love, and ſufferings which they have afforded, and ſtill do cheerfully continue, for our ſakes and the Goſpels, in this diſtracted and bleeding Kingdom; ſuppreſſe all commotions and bloody practices of the common Enemy, in both, yea in all the three Kingdoms; ſet up the Throne of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and make all the Kingdoms to be the Lords, and our *Jeruſalem* to be a praiſe upon Earth, that all that love her and mourn for her, may rejoyce for joy with her, and may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of her conſolation.

Weſtminſter, Jan. 6. 1644.

Subſcribed by *Your moſt loving Brethren, and fellow-labourers in the Work of the LORD, in the name of this whole Aſſembly.*

WILLIAM TWISE, Prolocutor.
CORNELIUS BURGES, Aſſeſſor.
JOHN WHITE, Aſſeſſor.
HENRY ROBROUGH, Scriba.
ADONIRAM BYFIELD, Scriba.

DIRECT.

To the Right Honourable, and Right Reverend, the Generall Aſſembly of the Church of *Scotland*, theſe preſent.

The

The Generall Assemblies Answer to the Right Reverend the Assembly of Divines in the Kirk of ENGLAND.

Right Reverend and well-beloved in the Lord JESUS,

AMidst the manifold troubles in which this Kingdom hath been involved, and under which it still laboureth, we greatly rejoyced when it was testified unto us by our reverend Brethren, and under your hands in your Letter, and these Papers by them presented to us from you, what progresse you had made in the much desired Work of Uniformity; and acknowledge, that the same hath *comforted us concerning our work and toile of our hands*, and seemeth to us as an olive branch, to prognosticate the abating of the waters, which overflow the face of the Earth.

When we consider, that you have walked in pathes unusuall, which have not been haunted by Travellers there, as the publike way, though pointed out as the good old way by the Reformed Kirks, we do not wonder that you have carefully adverted in every step to set foot upon sure ground; When we behold that strong and high tree of Episcopacy, so deeply rooted by continuance of time, not lopped of the Branches, and the *stumpe of the root left in the Earth, with a band of iron and brasse*, but pluckt up by the roots; We do confesse that the Carpenters, though prepared have a hard task, requiring time to hew it down, and root it up: And when

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we call to mind how much the Service-Book hath been cryed up, as the onely way of Gods Worship, how many thereby have had their wealth, and how difficill it is to forgo the accuſtomed way; We admire the power and wiſdom of the good God who hath proſpered you in your way, and led you this length, through ſo many ſtraits, and over ſo many difficulties in ſo troublous a time.

We do for our part not onely admit and allow, but moſt heartily and gladly embrace the Directory of Worſhip, as a common Rule for the Kirks of God in the three Kingdoms, now more ſtraitly and firmly united by the Solemne League and Covenant; And we do all in one voice bleſſe the Lord, who hath put it in the hearts, firſt, of the Reverend, Learned, and Pious Aſſembly of Divines, and then, of the Honourable Houſes of Parliament, To agree upon ſuch a Directory as doth remove what is none of Chriſts, and preſerve the purity of all his Ordinances, together with Uniformity and Peace in the Kirk. Onely we have thought neceſſary, to declare and make known, That the Clauſe in the Directory for the adminiſtration of the Lords Supper, which appointeth the Table to be ſo placed that the Communicants may orderly ſit about it, or at it, is not to be interpreted as if in the judgement of this Kirk it were indifferent for any of the Communicants not to come to and receive at the Table; or as if we did approve the diſtributing of the Elements by the Miniſters to each Communicant, and not by the Communicants among themſelves: In which particulars, we ſtill conceive and beleeve the order and practice of our own Kirk, To be moſt agreeable and ſutable to the Word of God, the example of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the nature of that Heavenly Feaſt and Table. Nevertheleſſe, in other particulars we have reſolved, and do agree, to do as ye have deſired us in your Letter, That is, not to be tenacious of old Cuſtoms, though lawfull in themſelves, and not condemned in this Directory, but to lay them aſide for the nearer Uniformity with the Kirk of *England*, now nearer and dearer to us than ever before; A Bleſſing ſo much eſteemed; and ſo earneſtly longed for among us, that rather than it faile on our part, we do moſt willingly part with ſuch practice and cuſtoms of own, as may be parted with ſafely, and without the violation of any of Chriſts Ordinances, or treſpaſſing againſt Scripturall Rules, or our Solemne Covenants.

We do in like manner agree to, and approve the Propoſitions touching

touching Kirk-Government and Ordination; and have given power to our Commissioners who are to meet in *Edinburgh*, to agree to, and conclude in our Name an Uniformity therein, betwixt the Kirks in both Kingdoms, so soon as the same shall be without any substantiall alteration Ratified by an Ordinance of the Honourable Houses of Parliament of *England*, according to our Act of Approbation sent to our Commissioners with you.

As for the returning of our Commissioners; though the councell and assistance of our Reverend Brethren might be of good use to us in these difficult times, and their particular stations and imployments importune the stay of these who are come unto us, and the returne of these who stay with you; yet preferring the publike good, and looking upon the profit may redound unto all by their continuing with you, we have satisfied your desire, and renewed their Commission; Praying God they may (as we are confident they shall) prove answerable to our trust, and to your expectation.

Concerning one Confession of Faith, and Forme of Catechisme, we apprehend no great difficulty: And to that which remains to be perfected in the matter of Kirk-Government, we do beleeve, and both you and we know by experience, that *there is no Word impossible with* our *God. He that hath begun a good Work among you, will also perform it* of his good pleasure. Go on in the Lord your strength, and *the Spirit of truth lead you in all truth: The God of all grace and peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant*, and by him *hath called us unto his eternall glory, make you perfect in every good Work to do his will, working in you, and by you, and among you, that which is well pleasing in his sight, stablish, strengthen, settle you, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Edinburgh 13 *Feb.* 1645.

Subscribed in name of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, *by the Moderator of the Assembly.*

The Assemblies Answer to their Commissioners at *London*.

Reverend and beloved Brethren,

THese sweet Fruits of your long continued Labours in the Work of the Lord entrusted to you, brought to us at this time by these two of your number, whom you were pleased to send, were received by us with no small joy and rejoycing, as being, in great part, the satisfaction of our Souls desire, in that so much longed for, so much prayed for happy Uniformity of these Kirks and Kingdoms: And an evident Demonstration to us, that the Lord hath not, even in this time of his seen and felt displeasure, so covered himself with the cloud of his anger, that our Prayers should not passe through.

The great and main difficulties through which the Lord hath carried this Work, as we do acknowledge, ought mainly to be made use of, for the praise and glory of his power, who is the great worker of all our works for us; So your overcoming of them is to us no small Demonstration of your zeal, wisdom, and faithfulnesse, which without great injury both to the Lord the prime Worker, and to you his Instruments, we cannot but acknowledge, hath been much manifested in the whole managing of this work in your hands.

The full answer to all the particulars you write of in your Letters, we leave to the Relation of those that come from you, and are now appointed to return to you: And as with much thankfulnesse we acknowledge your fidelity in what ye have done already;

ready; so we have again renewed your Commission for the continuance of your Imployment there, for the perfecting of the Work so happily begun: For the furthering whereof, as we shall not be wanting in our prayers to God for his blessing upon your labours, so for your help and assistance, we have appointed a Commission to sit at *Edinburgh*, to which at all occasions you may have your recourse, as the exigence of the Work shall require.

How satisfactory that Directory of Worship presented to us by our Brethren from you, was to us, we leave it rather to their relation at their return, being ear and eye-witnesses to the manifold expressions of our joy and gladnesse, then offer to represent it to you in a Letter: The Act herewith sent, and ordained to be prefixed unto the Directory, will sufficiently declare our hearty approbation of it: Our judgement also concerning the propositions of Government and Ordination, and our earnest desire to have the Work of Uniformity promoved and perfected in that particular also, will appear to you by the other Act which herewith you will receive: Our zeal and desire to have that Work fully closed with so much harmony as becometh the work of God, will appear to you in our resolution and answer to that particular in the point of Excommunication, concerning which you write.

These particular differences hinted at in the Assemblies Letter, for Uniformity with that Kirk so much endeared to us, we have resolved to lay aside, and have taken course for preserving harmony amongst our selves, whereof our Brethren will give you more particular account. Anent your desire of Mr *Alexander Henderson* his attending the Treaty, we are confident ere this you have received our resolution.

Amidst the many difficulties wherewith it pleaseth the Lord to presse us, as we thought it necessary to publish and send forth a Warning to all sorts of Persons in this Kirk and Kingdom, concerning the present affliction of this Nation, and their sins procuring the same; So we thought it incumbent to us in duty, as the best Testimony which we can give at this present to his Majesty, to remonstrate unto him faithfully The great and growing dangers his Majesty is now under, and the causes thereof. This Remonstrance we have sent to you, to be presented to his Majesty, by such means,

means, and at such time, as you who are there upon the place shall judge fittest.

And now dear Brethren, go on with cheerfulnesse in the Work of the Lord: Let no discouragement or opposition make your heart to faint, or your hands wax feeble; Perswade your self the Lords hand shall still be made known toward his Servants, and his indignation against his Enemies. Remember the Work is his, who useth not to begin, but also to make an end, and is abundantly able to supply all your need according to the riches of his glory. Be confident therefore of this thing, that he who hath begun this good Work by you, will also in due time accomplish it to his own praise. To his gracious assistance we heartily recommend you.

Postscript.

Edinburgh, 13 *Feb.* 1645.

It is earnestly desired That the Directory for Worship be sent to Ireland, and that you recommend to the Honourable Houses of the Parliament, To think upon the best way for the establishment and practice of it in that Kingdom. And that the like course may be taken with the Government, and other parts of the Uniformity, so soon as they shall be agreed upon.

Subscribed in name of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, by the Moderator of the Assembly.

FINIS.

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